



CERTIFICATION OF STATE REGISTER LISTING

KANSAS

STATE

HISTORICAL

SOCIETY



The Register of Historic Kansas Places includes all Kansas properties nominated to the National Register as well as lower threshold properties which are listed on the state register only.

Property Name: RITCHIE HOUSE

Address: 1116 S.E. Madison, Topeka, Kansas, Lots 374 & 376, Ritchie Add't

County: Shawnee

Owner: Shawnee County Historical Society

Address: P. O. Box 2201, Topeka, Kansas 66601

National Register eligible _____

State Register eligible XXX



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This property was approved by the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review for the Register of Historic Kansas Places on August 29, 1998.

I hereby certify that this property is listed on the Register of Historic Kansas Places.



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HISTORIC SITES

Adair Cabin
Constitution Hall
Cottonwood Ranch
First Territorial Capitol
Fort Hays
Goodnow House
Grinter Place
Hollenberg Station
Kaw Mission

The Ritchie House, 1116 Madison: section seven

Architectural Information

A. General Statement:

1. **Architectural Character:** The Ritchie House is an example of the vernacular house type known as a double-cell plan. The double-cell plan is an open plan meaning that it is designed "with direct access from the outside into the heated living areas of the dwelling."¹ This plan is related to the more commonly known plan called a hall-parlor house which has two rooms placed side by side with a common partition wall and a side entrance. Hall-parlor houses "were built from the early colonial period through the early 1900s."² The double-cell plan is found in smaller numbers than the hall-parlor and is differentiated from it because the two interior rooms are placed one behind the other rather than side by side, this distinction is made evident by an end entrance rather than a side entrance. Late nineteenth century examples of the double-cell are characterized "typically possessing a simple stove flue running common partition. The principal stair could be placed against the common partition dividing the front and rear rooms."³ A parallel between the diffusion of the house type and the correspondent route of the Ritchie

¹ Gabrielle M. Lanier and Bernard L. Herman, Everyday Architecture of the Mid-Atlantic: Looking at Buildings and Landscapes (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), p.12.

² Lanier, p.16.

³ Lanier, p.19,20.

family in America is just one more of the provocative coincidences that have occurred during the architectural analysis.

The obvious identification of the house plan type is however clouded by elements of the exterior finish. The typical early double-cell carried a simple gable roof system, however the Ritchie House carries a roof line of a more sophisticated style of house, known as Italianate or Italian Villa.⁴ This roof type is a hip with deck or truncated hip⁵ that can be described as being a hip roof where the hip rafters terminate in a flat deck rather than into the more typical ridge line. The roof also carries a decorative element of overhanging eaves that visually cap the exaggerated verticality of the front facade.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: the over-all dimension of the core house, excluding the front porch and rear kitchen and bathroom additions, is approximately 30' by 18'.⁶
2. Foundations: Limestone on clay bed.⁷ The subterranean limestone base course juts out irregularly toward the exterior. On the outside of the north wall the archeological excavation located a builders trench.

⁴ Henry Russel Hitchcock, Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (New York: Penguin Books, 1969), p.354.

⁵ James Shortridge, "Some Relationships Between External Housing Characteristics and House Types," Pioneer America, vol.13, no.2 (September, 1981), p.3.

⁶ Dan Rockhill's Ritchie House Cost Projections (January, 1996), Shawnee County Historical Society.

⁷ Pending Archeological Assessment, Kansas State Historical Society.

It is significant that one was located for," Dug for the purpose of seating the foundations, builders' trenches were wide enough to accommodate the footings of the building. Builders trenches remained open throughout construction; consequently building debris and other objects frequently collected or were dropped in them."⁸

3. Wall construction, finish and color: The structural system is made up of a slightly tapering native limestone walls, the taper goes from 18" at the base to 16" at the top. The exposed portions of the walls, in the basement, demonstrate random coursing with an exterior treatment, on what was once an eastern exterior entrance, corresponding to a rough ashlar stone cut. Most of the exterior has however been stuccoed with a light beige coloring, this layer has probably acted as a protective layer for the stone and mortar.

An exposed area of the side walls show that they were not as carefully placed as the old rear entrance facade. the jamb structural window lintels. In the earliest photo of the house, taken before the application of the stucco, there is evidence of large quoins at the corners of the structure.

The front facade was constructed with a decorative layer of brick veneer. Part of this layer has pulled away from the stone, possibly due to insufficient bonding, and is visible from beneath the stucco. This may have been due to the caving in of the hand tooled stone lintel above the front entrance of the house.

⁸ Lanier, p.63.

The mortar used in the construction of the walls, veneer and chimney, is of a type known as slaked lime, that combines lime and bank sand. Slaked lime is a powder that has water added to it so that it becomes a slurry. This type of mortar was displaced by hydrated lime or portland cement, and by the addition into the mix of sharp rather than rounded sand. This mortar is designed to be weaker than the stone. It will be crucial to save as much of this original mortar as possible and to replace it with a like substance, so that we do not introduce future structural problems that may result from an increase in hydrostatic pressure.

4. **Structural system, framing:** The main structural system is of limestone, however there is some sort of sub-structural system throughout the house that must have framing elements. This system relates to the emplacement of the hanging of the lathe boards that support the interior plastering. The west or front room of the house, on the first floor, is the only main structure portion that no longer carries a plaster finish, this room has been sheet rocked.

The previous information has been provided to explain some of the most crucial aspects of the nature of the house's design and materials. Photographs of the house in an historic and contemporary period will be provided as follows:

Fig 1. Ritchie house in background circa 1890.

Fig. 2. Ritchie house facade and south side.

Fig.3. Ritchie house rear view.

Fig. 4. House in foreground, neighborhood context.

Fig. 5. Map of Topeka highlighting Ritchie's Addition.

Fig. 6. Archeologists map of site, lot 374, 376.

An addendum of recent findings regarding the dating of the house will be attached.

Narrative Description encompassing sections 6 and 8
of the National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This nomination is for 1116 Madison, Topeka, Kansas. The building known as the Ritchie House is a small two story vernacular house. The house is related to the pioneering activities of Col. John Ritchie. The house is offered as a surviving symbolic example of Ritchie's political, economic and social activities that continued until his death in 1887. The house is surviving structure related to Ritchie, still to be found within the boundaries of the district he founded ,Ritchie's Addition to the city of Topeka.

It will demonstrate the connection of the remaining building to the years of John Ritchie's community building. Research that places the interior materiality of the house to a date of approximately 1868 is bolstered by structural evidence that suggests the house existed in substantial form for an indeterminate period prior to this date. The significant contributions of John Ritchie for the period of the late 1850s and early 1860s will be included because they elucidate his political and economic commitments that influence the direction of his later life.

Certain categories are provided as examples that establish the activities of historical individuals that are generally considered important in terms of local significance. The categories that apply to the individual in question, John Ritchie, are: 1. town founder; 2. entrepreneur who developed a

local business into the one of the community's main economic bases; 3. a developer responsible for the establishment, growth and prosperity of an important subdivision or suburban neighborhood; 4. a philanthropist responsible for major buildings, parks and institutions in the community; 5. a reformer whose leadership was a major factor in bringing about important political, social and economic changes. This essay will demonstrate that John Ritchie did achieve significant contributions to all five of the categories of community building previously mentioned.

A brief chronology of John Ritchie's biography will be laid out. Also to encompass the historical context of his times with some reference to his contemporaries in the various fields of endeavor to which his historical significance is here demonstrated.

John Ritchie was born in Uniontown, Muskingum County, Ohio July 17th, 1817. His family then moved to various places, basically corresponding to the route of the National Road, until they settled in Franklin, Johnson County, Indiana. It was there that Ritchie spent the majority of his formative years before bringing his family to Kansas in March of 1855. He brought with him his wife, Mary Jane Shelleday Ritchie, herself a pioneer of wide respect and renown in the early years of Topeka, and their young son, Hale.

Arriving shortly after the establishment of The Topeka Town Association, Ritchie was quickly accepted into the ranks of the town founders and was proposed for membership to the Association

on April 16th, 1855. Ritchie soon acquired from one Jacob Chase: Chase's one hundred and sixty acre claim and share in the Town Association for \$300. This land is designated as northeast quarter section 6, township 12, range 16, where Ritchie established his residence for the duration of his life. This claim's boundaries are roughly bounded by 10th Street on the north, Jackson Avenue on the west, 17th Street on the south, and the original channel of the Shunganunga Creek on the east. This claim, which came in time to be known as Ritchie's Addition to Topeka, is centered at the heart of John Ritchie's contribution to the city of Topeka.

Ritchie originally came to Kansas Territory with economic ambitions. However, the catalyst that lured him from his stable and established home in Indiana was a response to the popular sovereignty codices provided in Senator Steven Douglas' Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. Like many of his contemporaries: Cyrus K. Holiday, John Armstrong, Harvey D Rice, and Fry Giles, among others, he was strongly associated with the Free-State cause from the first. This included diverse activities in the troubles of 1856 that have come down to us as a period known to as "Bloody Kansas". In these activities Ritchie took an active leadership role, so much so that the pro-Democrat Topeka Tribune would accuse many of the most ardent abolitionists of the region as belonging to the "Ritchie Clique".

Politically, Ritchie dedicated personal energy and was a member of the Leavenworth Constitutional and Wyandotte Constitutional Conventions. He was also noted for activities

involving woman's suffrage, "Negro" suffrage, and temperance politics. His economic activities aside from farming included the opening of a limestone quarry on his homestead. This quarry was instrumental in much of the building of early Topeka by 1858. He also took needed action in building Topeka's first brick commercial block, known as the Ritchie Block, located at 6th Street and Kansas Avenue. This block housed the first legislature of Kansas.

As a town builder, however, his activities extended beyond merely speculative economic measures. In 1858, he participated with Farnsworth, Rice, Bodwell and others in the building of the First Congregational Church. In this action, he contributed time, materials and employee time in quarrying the stone for the walls and in the teams and teamsters who delivered the materials to the site. It was during this period that he envisioned a college for Topeka and went so far as to mortgage his own property to obtain the cash for the land that is now occupied by Washburn University.

He was also noted as an active participant with the Topeka station in the Underground Railroad. Participating in numerous actions that placed him and his family in danger with federal authorities. He is known to have aided along with Sheridan, Armstrong, and others in supplying materials, food and shelter for the fugitive party assisted by Captain John Brown out of bondage during Brown's final sojourn in the state. Andreas, in his History of Kansas, states that Ritchie and Brown shared the same bed on Brown's last night in the Territory. Furthermore,

Ritchie is recognized as leading a rescue posse from Topeka in response to John Brown's call for reinforcements during the famed Battle of the Spurs.

The following excerpts are from the reminiscences of H.D. Rice: "The year of 1858 was a very busy one. Work began in earnest in the middle of the Congregation Church walls. John Ritchie had men at work quarrying stone and teams hauling the same to the church site."

Further in this section, Rice begins a story about a fugitive bounty hunter named Isaac Edwards. "One Isaac Edwards, succeeding in capturing a fugitive working alone in a field near Burnett's mound, got him on his horse behind him and started for Tecumseh. John Ritchie, John Armstrong, James French, and others came to my place and we followed him, coming in sight of Edwards with his prisoner near Tecumseh Village. Edwards eluded us, crossing the river at Tecumseh and went north. His captive named Felix made his escape near Leavenworth and came back to Topeka and was escorted north to Holton with another fugitive, John by name, who had quarried stone for the church at Ritchie's."

This is but one of many stories of Ritchie's exploits on behalf of fugitives and struggles against the Fugitive Slave Law. It is important because it aides in establishing two things: one is Ritchie's work through his quarry of the establishment of an important community institution; secondly, and perhaps most importantly, it provides evidence of Ritchie's early employment in his quarry of an African American man who labored "illegally"

for Ritchie before he was aided along the path of the Underground Railroad.

Briefly, I also want to mention John Ritchie's record and contributions to the framing of what became the Kansas State Constitution at Wyandotte in 1859. When a proposal was introduced at the convention to establish a "black law" in Kansas, a code that would have excluded African American immigration to Kansas once admitted to statehood, it was Ritchie who called for the tabling of the motion. The tabling vote on this motion succeeded in demonstrating majority opinion against the proposal. Aside from Ritchie's notable appeal for Women's Suffrage at this date, he also figures into two other important votes and gestures. On a vote to exclude African-American children from the public schools in Kansas, Ritchie's name appears in the majority polled to vote no on the proposal. On a motion to strike out the word "white" from the clause on the qualification of electors, Ritchie was one of the three members who voted yea. This is just one of countless examples where Ritchie rose above prevailing moods and acted according to his conscience.

This political and moral commitment in establishing an historical legacy is demonstrated by the steps he took to open his claim to African-American settlement. This action in fostering African-American settlement in vicinity of Topeka was neither half hearted nor was its impact of inconsequential duration. The action taken created a settlement that has remained to the present day. It effectively created what the

scholar Fred Kniffin has termed the doctrine of first effective settlement, a pattern that lends itself to the shaping of all subsequent settlement patterns. The most famous and far reaching consequence of which was the fostering of an African-American enclave that engendered the establishment of the Monroe School. That school achieved world wide fame due to its connection with the celebrated Brown et. al. vs. Board case that acted as the catalyst for the 1954 Supreme Court decision that forever ended the doctrine of separate but equal facilities in American public schools. The story of the establishment of this settlement pattern, similar to the fading of John Ritchie's name, respective to other town builders of his time such as Cyrus K. Holliday, became obscured in the subsequent development of Topeka. Many scholars who trace the history of African-American immigration to Kansas consistently link the arisal of said immigration to the "exodus" of 1879. The development of Tennessee Town in west central Topeka and the attention it received through the patronage of Rev. Sheldon and the Central Congregational Church further acted to down play the importance of pre-exodus settlement. As has been alluded to John Ritchie's work with the Underground Railroad was only a precursor to the post civil war activity he fostered on behalf of African-American settlers of Kansas. Research into the 1868 Topeka City directory's residential listings demonstrates that Ritchie's addition had already become a haven of African American settlement, a decade before the 1879 "exodus".

The earliest use and occupancy of the house in question remains to be fully divulged through continued historical research. The rediscovery of the house was related to a strong tradition of family lore among the Ritchie descendants. The family passed down information that the "old stone house" had been the early home of their illustrious ancestor, Col. Ritchie. However a pattern of historical data emerges that the building was used to house skilled workers associated with the Ritchie quarry site and kilning ventures, for example in 1870 an African American plasterer named John Brown and an African American lime burner named William McNeil are both listed as residing on the east side of Madison Street between 11th and 12th Streets. Also listed specifically to the east side of Madison between 11th and 12th Streets is a European American stone cutter named Andrew Nelson. Another European American laborer named J.S. Ritchie is listed as boarding in the same location.

In 1872, two European-American stone masons, J.B. Hannum and James Kellmore, are listed as residing and boarding at said location respectively. In 1874 an African-American mason named John Ford is residing on the east side of Madison between 11th and 12th Streets along with one European-American mason named Joshua B. Hannum.

In 1878 Hale Ritchie, son of Col. John Ritchie took up residence at this location exclusive of any other listing and continued there until he finished his "modern" house next door at 1118 Madison built between 1882-1886.

The pattern that emerges specific to the house at 1116 Madison is one that opens up broad curiosity and provides an example of the many uses it was put to during the decade of the 1870s. The location there of both African-American and European-American workers, all of whom are related occupationally to stoneworking and related construction practices helps to poise the house as being an important vehicle as a quarry and kiln support house. The fact that it was a space, shared in a multi-cultural sense is illuminating in that it works towards dispelling certain 20th century American cultural myths that surround the subject of racial relations.

As to who would have built such a house and to the subject of who ultimately benefited from providing it points back to the man to whom the entire district owes its start, Col. John Ritchie, Quarryman and "Capitalist".

As the neighborhood grew around the site of the house and adjacent quarry and kiln the solitary importance of the site was obscured. The data accumulated further illuminates the multi-racial residential occupancy in the block in this early period of Topeka's development.

Indeed Ritchie was known as a man ahead of his time. Fry Giles in his Thirty Years in Topeka, simply states "Mr. Ritchie made no discrimination against colored men in selling his grounds, and quite a large proportion of the settlers in that district were of the colored race; a circumstance that militated against the sale of lots to white people, and the locality has remained comparatively unoccupied from that cause." Giles

published that statement in 1886 one year prior to Ritchie's death, and while it was obviously perceived to be an honest assessment the key word in the passage is the term "comparatively unoccupied". Research findings focused on the area demonstrate a pattern of multiracial residential trends. The fact is also demonstrated through occupational analysis and cursory census research that the area was one of largely working class economic origins. The preponderance of stone cutters, quarrymen and masons of both culture groups mentioned is further testimony to Ritchie's impact in establishing the growth and prosperity of an important subdivision and neighborhood; and in bringing about significant social and economic changes that have endured throughout Topeka's historical development. An article published in the Daily Capital Saturday Oct. 9, 1886 exemplifies the recognition Ritchie received during his lifetime and helps in summing up his overall role and stature during the period. The article is ostensibly about the development of South Topeka during the period, but no such article would have been complete without reference to the man who gave rise to the district. The concluding paragraphs of the article are as follows:

"The only religious organizations possessing a place of worship, (in the vicinity) are the colored Methodists and the colored Baptists. The Methodists meet in the school house and have an organization of some strength. They are contemplating the erection of a church edifice of their own in the near future."

"General John Ritchie, (brevetted brigadier two weeks before the close of the civil war) is one of the pioneers of Kansas. He has lived here for thirty six years and will stay here until he dies. He says he always entertained the highest hopes of the city which he helped found. He has lived to see Topeka grow from a village of a few score persons to the leading city of Kansas. He says he will yet live to see it grow and expand until it becomes the one great city between the Mississippi and the Pacific. His predictions may be pronounced extravagant, but they are no more wonderful than those he has made before, which have been fulfilled."

"General Ritchie was the original owner of all the land known as Ritchie's Addition, which occupies the greater part of South Topeka, or that portion of it lying east of the Avenue. He still owns a great amount of land in that locality and takes, accordingly great interest in everything that pertains to the city. General Richie [misspelling from article] seemed to think that Topeka would secure the K., N., and D. Shops; [Kansas, Nebraska, and Dakota, later purchased by the Missouri Pacific] he has had extensive dealings with the company, and ample opportunities to get information on the subject. His opinion is worth something. In all that concerns the future welfare of Topeka General Richie assured the reporter of the Capital that he would be cooperating in every enterprise that would aid in building up a great metropolis."

Clearly the pattern set by John Ritchie can be used as a demonstrable example of a contribution largely significant to the

history of Topeka. The little stone vernacular house, built and utilized by John Ritchie in the achievement of many of his goals is an important remnant of a vanishing aspect of Topeka's historical story. While his large residence at 1106 Quincy went the way of many fine homes of Topeka's founders on the eastern rim of downtown, demolition and displacement; the survival of the small and unobtrusive remnant of his legacy rests as a prime example of the simple yet hard fought story of Topeka's rich social history. Indeed it is often the architectural record of the working class, reexamined through the lens of material cultural studies, that has enriched the scholarship of the social history of those that labored to build the cities and towns of America. Yet, all too often these non-ostentatious artifacts are dismissed by our throw-away modern society, discarded and misunderstood by a current generation that supposedly yearns to reconnect with its cultural heritage.

This little house is poised, through the auspices of the foundation that stewards it, to be able to become a valuable local resource as house museum and historic site. Nomination to the State Registry is but the most recent step of this house in finding its way back to meaning and recognition.

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Ritchie house 1116 Madison Addendum Report

The utilization of material analysis in tracing a specific time period for dating a buildings initial construction can open up as many questions as it solves. Identification of tooling marks on lumber is crucial for placing a building or structure within a discernible time period. Identifiable construction practices that held current for a specific period and were then modified or abandoned are also indicators of structural vintage. But aside from the journaling of an historic carpenter/ builder, the stenciled mark left by a craftsman or lumber dealer are perhaps the most specific artifactual evidence obtainable for dating the vintage of a building.

The three stencils identified at 1116 Madison are from carpenter/ builder Hugo Kullak, Leavenworth lumber dealer H. D. Rush, and Topeka lumber dealer John Wayne and Company. The verifiable historical identity of these three men and their firms contribute to the placement of the house or a substantial portion of the materiality within a specific range of time. Hugo Kullak's stencil is found on the under side of the subflooring of the ground and second story floors. H. D. Rush's stencil is stamped on this same material. John Wayne and Company, the third and most elusive stencil mark is found on the floor joists in both core house basement rooms.

Hugo Kullak was a Prussian born in Berlin who first came to Topeka in 1860. At that time he listed himself as a carpenter by trade. During the decade of the 1860s, Kullak prospered in Topeka and started a family. It has been presumed that he was active in German cultural life in this period.¹ For instance, he was president of the Topeka Turn Verien in 1868, and I expect to find him among the original ten founders of the German Methodist Episcopal Church. By the first Topeka Directory, Kullak lists himself as an architect and builder. Fry Giles in his Thirty Years in Topeka states, "in 1868 better dwelling houses were erected than previously, notably one

¹Adams, Paul. "The Topeka Turn Verien", Bulletin of the Shawnee County Historical Society, no.18 March 1953, p.7.

by Hugo Kullak on the Northwest corner of Topeka and Seventh.” Hugo Kullak is buried in Topeka Cemetery. He was interred there in 1873.

H.D.Rush was also in the territory by 1860-61. Henry D. Rush originally from Rushville, Indiana, incidentally located 40 miles from Franklin, John Ritchie’s home place, is listed by the 1863-64 Leavenworth City Directory as Rush, H.D. with J. Ingersoll, Lumber. In 1865-66 Rush is identified in the directory as being connected with a firm called Ingersoll and Rush. It is not until 1868-69 that Rush is listed as an independent lumber dealer, H.D. Rush, successor to Ingersoll and Rush. By 1870-71, Ingersoll’s son has taken up the independent usage of Ingersoll Lumber while Rush has joined a firm called Garrett and Rush. In succeeding years, Rush departs from the lumber business and becomes involved in various large wheat milling ventures.

The identification of John Wayne and Company has only recently been clarified. This was mainly due to the faded and partially altered character of those stencils. I have located John Wayne and Co. within this general mid to late 1860s time period. John Wayne and Company was still active in 1868, but his name disappears entirely from the 1870 directory under both commercial and individual listings. The succession of events in the complicated business life of H.D. Rush is the most specific, 1868-69 being the only two years he would have independently advertised as a lumber dealer. The fact that Hugo Kullak was in Topeka by 1860 and that he died and was buried there in 1873 gives us a thirteen year window of possibility for his involvement with the house. However he had obviously risen above the common ranks of craftsman and had established a solid reputation as a builder by 1868 is a convenient match with the most probable years that Rush supplied the material of the pine subflooring. By 1870 Kullak was also a lumber supplier.

Certain evidence in the basement of the house, especially the unusual hung floor, may still indicate that the house existed in substantial form prior to the date of the existing stencils.